A CRITICAL REVIEW.

Of the American Society Novel of the Present Day.

BY MAURICE FRANCIS EGAN.

Professor of English Language and Literature in the Catholic University of America—A Comprehensive and Very Brilliant Analysis of the American and European Product from the Literary Point of View.

The phrase "society novel" was invented in the United States. What it represents was for some time, under another name, a literary institution in England. In France the novel called "Roman de Moeurs" is rather a social study than a mere "society novel." Lady Blessington, Mrs. Gore, Miss Ferrier, and, the most important, Miss Edgeworth, wrote, not "society novels," but "tales of fashionable life." When we mention the "society novel" we mean a tale of life more or less fashionable. The more fashionable it is the more of a "society novel" it is. For instance, Robert Grant's "Unleavened Bread" is a social study, but hardly a society novel, while Mrs. Burton Harrison's "Anglomaniacs" is essentially a society novel, as is her "Sweet Bells Out of Tune." Mrs. Hodgson Burnett's "Through One Administration," and Maurice Low's "Supreme Surrender," and Mrs. Gertrude Atherton's "Senator North" are novels of society in Washington.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, tales of fashionable life flourished, and their tone was usually the same. London, Bath, Brighton and Tunbridge Wells were the scenes in which Belinda, Lady Delcour, Miss Montenero and the Ladies Olivia and Helen suffered, fainted, turned pale, showed "sensibility," tried to catch husbands, and gossiped about their prospective husbands' estates and incomes, Tric-trac cabinets, routs, court birthdays, performances of Voltaire's "Taire," and "The Maid of the Village," Ranelegh, Vauxhall and Italian concerts, where the rakes say "damme" and "gad," and the best people speak mongrel French, fill pages which, so far as Miss Edgeworth is concerned, still have interest.

The morals of Miss Edgeworth's heroines are always unimpeachable; nevertheless their reputations must always be carefully guarded. English society in 1780–1817 was evidently ready on all occasions to think the worst. It is different now—the heroine of the society novel may outrage all the conventionalities, but nobody is ever allowed to think the worst. Thackeray set the example in the case of Becky Sharp. Who shall dare to throw a stone at her because she took the diamonds of the kind Marquis of Steyne? There is no novelist of to-day daring enough to take Miss Edgeworth's tone in regard to his men and their wives. In "Leonora;" for instance—in which one lives in the best society the country house of a daughter of a duchess could afford—Lady Olivia, spoiled by the Parisian tone, makes love to Leonora's husband outrageously. It is true Leonora faints once, but afterward she endeavors to conceal her sensibility. Leonora endures all, encouraged to this forbearance by a very unusual kind of mother-in-law, until Mr. L. sets up an establishment with Lady Olivia, who is "virtuous" after the manner of Mme. De Genlis. Leonora weeps silently, and when her husband discovers that Lady Olivia has been making fun of him, she receives him with joy. Several terrible struggles, not conceivable to the modern author of tales of fashionable life, occur on the subject of divorce—notably the sacrifice of one of the young gentlemen in "Patronage," who gives up a most charming young lady because her mother is a divorcee.

Society in America in the early days had neither traditions, nor the fixed forms, nor the settled classes that make for the artificial product, the society novel. The ways of old New York were homely ways. When George Washington led Sally Fairfax out to dance the minuet in the Carlyle House, at Alexandria, all fashionable gossip concerned itself with London. And even in polite Philadelphia—in which travelling Frenchmen found the only possible society in the country—everything was rather homespun until Major Andre entertained all the Tory belles with his decorations for the Mischianza. After the revolution society in each important city began to form. In the lifetime of Dolly Madison hordes of hungry Democrats besieged the White House for meals, but still there was the beginning of a "republican court." The Philadelphia assembly was founded. Alexandia had already become the center of Virginia fashion, and the outer material for the "society novel" was forming.

Before the war Mrs. Anna Cora Mowatt and N. P. Willis began to see its possibilities, though I believe Mrs. Mowatt's chef d'oeuvre was a comedy, "Fashion," not a novel. The rich merchants figured in the novels of the day, against trade, and persons of foreign title were as a rule represented as imposters. Miss Caroline Lee Hentz gave pictures of high life in the South, and somewhat later Marion Harland did the same thing. The man's soul must be dead who can recall "Lena, or the Young Pilot of the Belle Creole," and "Alone" without emotion.

T. S. Arthur made domestic tales, tinctured with such fashion as obtained in the household of opulent merhants; but, however proud the first families of the South might be, or however exclusive the families of the North might try to be, "high life" was not a phrase to be indiscretely used; as for the West, its families then were all first families. Without the court, without the Almack's, without the opera, without the rivalry of social aspirations—without artificiality, in fact—the English society novel could not have existed. The artificial conditions necessary for the formation of society—with a capital "s"—began to form. The Prince de Joinville, the Prince of Wales, the Grand Duke Alexis, coming in turn, each had his effect in crystallizing social aspirations. With the growth of enormous fortunes and the destruction of the southern aristocratic system, social life took new phases. White Sulphur Springs for a time was almost erased from the map. Saratoga ceased to be fashionable; Newport arose. The international marriage and frequent English intercourse added new qualities, and the element of all, American society novels. Mrs. Burton Harrison's "Anglomaniacs" was the result. Before this Mayo had written his "Never Again," which is so good that it does not deserve to be forgotten. Both these novels were written in New York, and logically so, for New York, with Washington at some distance, was ten years ago looked on as the only center of artificial social life in America. Other cities must, logically, be provincial. Today Washington is perhaps somewhat ahead of New York in possibilities for the novel of society. Society in Washington, while even more artificial than in New York, does not exclude all that are not excessively rich, so that it offers some of the elements which the foreign novelists find in London or Paris.

A society novel cannot be written of Columbus or Detroit or San Francisco or Chicago, though the subtle author of the "Chevalier Pensieri-Vani" has tried it in vain; for such a novel must not be merely local or provincial. Tales of the provinces can never be "fashionable" in the sense in which a novel of London, Paris, Washington or New York can be fashionable. There is excellent society in Birmingham, England; in Tours, France; in Philadelphia, in Richmond, but a society novel, to be successful, must not concern itself with the local or provincial place. Its scene must be laid in a city the society of which is acknowledged to be the most representative, the most fashionable, the most elegant in the whole country. Vienna stands for this in Austria, Berlin in Germany, St. Petersburg in Russia, and Washington—though outside of the season the most provincial of cities—begins to stand for it in the United States. A society novel, then must arise from artificial conventions and conditions; it must have a fixed background due to a more or less aristocratic sentiment, and the conditions must have such a character that they cannot be called "local" in the provincial sense. In a word, they must, in the novel, be near to the conditions that make elegant society in all the great centers of civilization.

James's "Bostonians," saturated with the Athenian flavor, is not a society novel; Mr. Crawford's "Katharine Lauderdale" would be, if Mr. Crawford knew New York. Mr. Howells's novels—important as they are—are local and out of society. Mrs. Gertrude Atherton's California novels give pictures of a semi-barbarous life. Christian Reid's have the old Southern tone of a life that is past; Janvier's short stories, like "In St. Peter's Set," give the provincial point of view admirably, which might be one quality in a novel of society, but which would have no other value. Miss Bonner's "Hard Pan" is a picture of local society in a state of transition, and this may be said, too, of the stories of Octave Thanet.

The French novels of high life—those of Octave Feuillet offer the best examples for our purposes—are strictly Parisian, even when the scene changes to old chateaux in Dauphiny or gay villas at Biarritz. Paris, in the background, offers all the pleasure, all the intellectuality of life. And the charm of Gyp—whom I mention with an apology—is that she, even in the provinces, is thoroughly Parisian. In the French or English novels you cannot escape Paris or London. In ours, as a rule, the capital or the metropolis is only an incident—the author basks in the light of any city he loves.

The number of local centers in the United States, each with its conditions and points of view, have not encouraged the production of good society novels. Makers of social usage differ in all their centers. Even at Newport, a woman decides that she must be "Mrs. Jones," rather than Mrs. John Jones by the might of her will. In a fixed society precedence is arranged. You know that Gladys Duchess of Barchester is not the reigning duchess. Even at Newport a marquise of undoubted position will precede Mrs. Anybody, if Mrs. Anybody is not the guest of honor. Society in transition is a difficult subject for the novelist who would avoid sarcasm: in fact, society—acknowledged society in the English or French sense—cannot be founded merely on money, and that is the reason why Mrs. Burton Harrison has produced only one good society novel—there was material only for one.

Washington offers an excellent field, but all attempts so far to reap it have been unsuccessful. Mrs. Dahlgren knew her society well, but in "A Washington Winter" she made a caricature, because she was, above all, a romanticist. Mrs. Burnett's "Through One Administration" was a surface picture—with none of the sincerity of "That Lass of Lowrie's." Mrs. Gertrude Atherton's "Senator North" is an impressionist view of a social condition which is not typical, rather brutally untrue. The latest society novel, Maurice Low's "Supreme Surrender," has Washington society as a background. It is brilliantly written, but it is more like the work of a brilliant social student who has turned his reflections into conversations than of an author who paints life as it is. It is not redolent of the atmosphere of Washington. Senator Laughton is cut from the same block from which Mrs. Atherton carved Senator North. There is no strong typical character; and yet all the persons in the book might easily live in Washington. The power of Trollope, whose tales of fashionable life are admirable, might have vivified it; but before we lay the blame of failure upon Maurice Low's "Supreme Surrender," let us decide whether conditions are not lacking for the fulfillment of the American public's expectation when it asks for a typical "society novel."

MAURICE FRANCIS EGAN.

The Bell of Justice.

A beautiful little story is told which is well worth repeating here. In one of the old cities of Italy, so the story goes, the King had a bell hung up in a tower in one of the public squares, and called it the "Bell of Justice," and commanded that any one who had been wronged should go and ring the bell and so call the judge of the city to come and see that justice was done.

In the course of time the end of the bell rope rotted away, so a wild vine was tied to it to lengthen it. One day an old and starving horse that had been turned out by its cruel owner to die, wandered into the tower, and in trying to eat the vine rang the bell to which it was attached. When the judge of the city came to see who had rung the bell, he found this old horse. Then the judge sent for the owner of the poor horse and ordered that, since this animal, which had been so wronged, had rung the "Bell of Justice," he should have justice done to him. He commanded the owner, therefore, to take the horse home and to feed and care for him as long as he should live.

Though President Roosevelt is the youngest chief magistrate this country has ever had, he is not so youthful as the heads of some other governments. The President is 43 years old, but Emperor William will not be 42 until the 27th of this month. The Czar of Russia is only 31. Emmanuel II of Italy will be 33 this coming November. Wilhelmina of Holland was 21 years old last month, and Alfonzo XIII of Spain, the youngest of them all, was only 15 May 17 last.

REVERE RODGERS

Writes an Absorbingly Interesting Article for the Globe.

OLD HISTORIC WILLIAMSBURG.

The Times and Men of Long Ago, and the Deeds of Fair Women and Brave Men—The Clustering Memories Which Hang Around the Old Place and the Many Incidents and Happenings Which Transpired When American "Knighthood Was in Bloom" and the Old South Was in the Saddle.

"Give me liberty, or give me death," rang out the trumpet-like voice of Patrick Henry one morning considerably over a century ago, in the little state Capitol at Williamsburg. It was a cry that was heard and hearkened to from one end of the country to the other. A cry which sent the hot blood coursing through every fiber in the patriot's body. It was indeed the battle-cry of freedom; and as I paused in my walk the other morning at the identical spot where once stood this historic capitol building, my fancies traveled back to that memorable morning of long ago, where the tall and severe figure of Patrick Henry, then twenty-nine years old, stood up among his fellows, and with the fire of patriotism flashing from his sparkling blue eyes, shouted forth the defiant sentence that electrified his countrymen and caused our cousins across the water many hours of excited consultations.

A short distance from the spot where once rested the capitol's foundation stands the modest little court house, within whose narrow walls the greatest jurists of a century ago practiced their vocation. Ah, me, what glorious oratorical battles must have occurred within this quaint old building. What superb wit and legal acumen must have been displayed here by such eminent practioners as Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe, Benjamin Harrison, the two Randolphs, John Tyler, John Blair, Carter Braxton, Tom Nelson, Chief Justice Marshall, and numerous other famous men, who have argued eloquently within this insignificant and grim old edifice, that could it but speak would delight the world by simply repeating the witticisms and bon mots that were bandied about on court days by the stately and dignified gentlemen of long, long ago.

A stone's throw from the old court-house is the site of what was once the palace of the crown governors, where, if tradition is to be believed, the fetes given here were indeed upon a royal and magnificent scale. The first royal governor of Virginia, Nicholson, commenced the construction of this magnificent palace, and the governors, who succeeded him in the following-named order—Spottswood, Drysdale, Carter, Gooch, Dinwiddie, Farquier, who dissolved the burghers' assembly because Patrick Henry made a speech there in which he declared that "Cæsar had his Brutus, Charles I. his Cromwell," and he added in a menacing manner, that "George III. may profit by their example"—added to the beauty of the palace. After Farquier's death, 1768, Berkeley (Lord Botetourt), was sent from England. He died, 1776, and lies beneath the chapel of William and Mary college, the best loved governor of all Virginia's many executives. The most hated was Lord Dunmore, the last royalist governor of Virginia.

Near the governor's palace was situated the famous Raleigh Tavern; adjoining the tavern was a large assembly room, also used as a theatre, the first in America, it is said, at which Shakespeare's plays were acted. These were, indeed, the merry days in Williamsburg's history. What with the assemblys, the theatre, the fetes at the governor's palace, and the nightly entertainments everywhere, the old city was indeed a hotbed of gaiety. But wait; amid all this extravagant confusion there were men in Williamsburg who did other things besides riding about dressed in costly velvets. There were profound thinkers like Randolph, Burwell, Wythe, Henry and other famous men, who began to murmur, then to talk loud, and then so loud that their cries were heard and answered by such men as John Hancock, Otis, the Adams', Franklin, and a score or more of other Northern patriots.

Ah! me; what excited gatherings must have been held in the brilliant Raleigh Tavern. (It was here the Burghers held their meetings after Farquier had dissolved their assembly) during those trying days of doubts and anxiety. Think of the eloquent and impassioned speeches that were delivered here by that little body of staunch patriots; yet up to the very day of the great struggle the gay and fashionable of Williamsburg merrily made their pleasure rounds and laughed, danced and were altogether merry.

And one day there came a messenger into the old town, and halting before the crowded Raleigh Tavern, he told a remarkable story of a strange happening way up in Lexington, Mass.

Like a flash, the gaiety vanished from Williamsburg and men and women wore crape upon their hats. The burghers were so loud and defiant in their denunciations of the outrage, that Lord Dunmore essayed to close up their meetings. The burghers couldn't see the reasoning quality in Dunmore's request, and flatly told him to get hence, and at last things in Williamsburg becoming altogether too warm for this Englishman, he stole off one dark night and concealed himself on the royal warship that lay off Yorktown, and thus ended the English reign in Williamsburg, and all this happened long, long ago. I mused as I left the spot where once stood the palace of the royal governors and slowly made my way in the direction of William and Mary College.

This fine old institution was founded in 1694, and is the oldest college in the South. It has turned out the greatest men in the history of this country. Two Presidents, Jefferson and Monroe, were graduated here, as was the eminent Chief Justice Marshall also. The college is a stately, dignified edifice, and is well patronized to this day. General Washington was chancellor of the college up to the time of his death, and he was particularly proud of the fact. It was from this institution that he received his commission as surveyor in 1750.

The first newspaper published in Virginia saw the light of day in Williamsburg in the year 1736, and was printed in a small house that immediately joined the mansion where many years afterwards Washington had his headquarters.

Washington's house still stands, and is a square brick place, built in true colonial style, and was once the home of the learned Chancellor Wythe, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. The house adjoins Bruton churchyard, where repose many of Virginia's illustrious dead.

A walk through this quaint old burying ground, on a quiet spring morning when not a sound disturbs the stillness of the place, causes curious fancies to arise in a person's mind, and in glancing about at the many moss covered tombstones, replete with distinguished names, one finds one's self unconsciously picturing to himself the probable appearance in life of the forms that lie under the silent and grim tombstones.

I pause before a stone that bears upon its face a glowing eulogy on the form which it covers. The subject of this eulogy must have been in life quite a popular idol, judging from the matter graven on the stone. It sets forth that the youth who lies beneath was handsome, courtly, and of a lovable disposition, but was killed on the 19th of October, 1766, in the Assembly Rooms, Williamsburg, Va., being then in his twentieth year.

Ah! what a field of imagination these last few words opened up to me. Standing over the grave of this once fair and gallant youth, my fancy went back to that memorable evening in October, over one hundred and forty years ago, and in my mind I could see again the stately cavaliers and handsome ladies who were congregated at the brilliant Raleigh assembly rooms when this young boy was killed.

When I closed my eyes for a moment and stood lost in thought, I could almost imagine that the rustle and swish of the costly dresses worn by this distinguished assemblage on that fatal night of long, long ago, were distinctly perceptible to my ear, and then I mused as to the probable cause of the lad's oath. Was it the result of some high-strung boyish quarrel over "ye fair lady?" No sooner had my mind accepted this version of the affair, than my fancy quickly spread before my eyes a picture of two handsomely dressed youths, with flushed countenances, not altogether caused by exuberant health, standing in defiant attitudes facing one another, and surrounded by a crowd of powdered and bewigged gentleman.

After a few heated words, perhaps the lie is passed and each, surrounded by his particular adherents, adjourn to some secluded apartment in which to settle their quarrel, either by pistols or swords. 'Tis all over in a few seconds and one of the "hot-headed" lads is borne from the fatal room with his young life's blood rapidly dyeing his plentifully ruffled and snowy white shirt bosom a bright, bright red.

And for nearly one hundred and fifty years this lad who had so much to live for, so many excellent prospects, has rested quietly and undisturbed in old Bruton churchyard, while, perhaps, clustered near about are many of that gay crowd who were present on that memorable night of long, long ago.

Nearby the tomb of this young cavalier is the grave of Lady Christine Stewart, conspicuous by having an unlettered slab of marble over it. This lady was a descendant of Mary Queen of Scots, and married a Williamsburg gentleman, who was then a student of Edinburgh University. She is reported to have possessed the Stewart beauty in a large degree. Let us hope that it was more of a blessing to her than it had been to so many of this ill-fated, but handsome race.

A few yards distant from Lady Stewart's resting place stands the most remarkable tombstone in old Bruton churchyard, if not in any other churchyard. It is a stone which has cut upon its hoary surface a mournful lesson to all young men who are addicted to riotous dissipations and evil associates. This stone guards the grave of a young English actor, and the sermon on the stone is reported to have been written by the unfortunate Thespian sometime before his death, (he died of a lingering disease,) with the solemn injunction that it be cut upon his tombstone after his demise.

The epitaph reads that the person which reposes beneath the stone was the son of gentle parents, well reared and educated, fair of face and robust of figure, but who through dissipation and bad associates fell ill of disease and died in a foreign land at the early age of 27—a warning, the epitaph reads, to all other young men who are dissipated and who frequent wicked places. This stone is quite large and broad, but the queer sermon from the dead covers its entire surface, and is terrifying enough to make the most dissipated of mankind pause and take heed of the possible goal in front of them if they do not immediately abandon their wicked ways.

Dear me! over a century has passed since this obscure actor was first laid in old Bruton churchyard, and scores of men who afterwards adopted his noble profession have risen to prominence, but had this young Englishman lived, might not his name have been as famous as any? Perhaps the world lost the most polished Hamlet, the fiercest Othello, the greatest Marc Antony, or the cruelest Shylock, when the early demise of this eccentric young Thespian occurred in the quaint little town of Williamsburg, so many, many years ago.

And as I stood musing by this lone grave, the first verse of "Gray's Elegy, the Epitaph," occurred to me and I found myself unconsciously repeating:

"Here rests his head upon the lap of earth,
A youth to fortune and to fame unknown;
Fair science frowned not on his humble birth,
And melancholy marked him for her own."

Passing from the quaint old burying ground, I entered old Bruton parish church, which was erected in 1715, and is still in an excellent state of preservation. It contains many interesting curios connected with the early history of Virginia, among which is the original font at which Pocahontas was baptized.

This rare vessel was one of the few articles saved from the conflagration that was started by the "Rebel" Bacon, and which unhappily destroyd the entire city of Jamestown.

Bruton Parish Chrch is Episcopal, and strongly reminds one of old Christ Church, Alexandria, and although it lays no claim to the fact that General Washington was ever a vestryman there, as does the latter sacred edifice, yet Washington was a regular communicant here as long as he resided in Williamsburg.

Leaving Bruton church I strolled down the Duke of Gloucester street and came upon a crowd of joy William and Mary College students paying baseball in the college grounds, the joyous shouts being the only disturbing element in the quaint, quiet and historical old city.

The college is quite an imposing structure, and I understand is in a flourishing condition, being strongly at variance with the rest of the towns, which presents a forlorn appearance with its grass-covered walks and tottering buildings; and to think of the days the old place once saw—ah! and such days. Turning into a side street that runs parallel with the college grounds, I ran plump against a venerable "cullud" gentleman, one of that antiquated species so numerous in the South before the war, but now, I am sorry to relate, fast, fast disappearing.

I spent an enjoyable half-hour sitting by his side listening to his reminiscences of the early days of Williamsburg.

And as the old fellow rattled on I closed my eyes and seemed to see the very scenes he was engaged in describing. Now it was some great public event that had occurred, perhaps a hundred years before; then it was a celebrated duel between "Young Mars'r Harry G——— and L'yer Torm A———," and so the old darkey talked, skipping from tragedy to gaiety, then to hare-brained escapades of the young "Mars'rs" of long, long ago.

It required but little exertion of one's imagination, after listening to my voluble companion, to picture to himself the streets of Williamsburg once again filled with the richly dressed cavaliers and the handsome ladies of the long ago. One would unconsciously catch one's self half expecting to hear the tramp, tramp of the gaily bedecked horses and the merry jests and joyous laughter of these riders of other days! Ah! and such days.

Reluctantly tearing myself away from my agreeable companion I mounted my horse and, pointing his head in the direction of Yorktown, which is 12 miles away, I slowly left the once famous and still historic, quaint, quiet little city called Williamsburg.

NOTED EDITOR'S APPETITE.

Colonel Watterson's Remarkable Abilities as a Trencherman.

Henry Watterson, the great Kentucky editor, is one of the largest eaters among the public men of the United States. His capacity in that respect seems unlimited. As a fair example of his capabilities two incidents will suffice.

On one occasion he attended the bi-monthly meeting of the Salmagundi Club of Louisville. A banquet was one of the attractions of these meetings. Before, during and after the banquet there were discussions, but the banquet was the thing. On this night it was at the house of the editor of the Republican paper of Louisville. The menu was one of fourteen courses, with the usual wines. One course was quail, and Mr. Watterson had two; another was venison, and again he was served twice. This happened in about half of the courses.

Before the end of the dinner all the other club members were but tasting what was put before them, but Mr. Watterson was eating all and often calling for more. When the dinner was ended, the rival editors went to their offices together. When they reached Newspaper Row, Mr. Watterson said:

"Colonel, I am hungry. Let's go over to Beymer's—a cafe much affected by newspaper men—"and have something to eat."

"Great Scott, Watterson! I've filled all the space in my lockers, but I'll drop in and watch you eat."

The colonel claims that Mr. Watterson ate two pounds of cheese, half of an immense bologna sausage, a bowl of crackers and drank six bottles of beer, and Mr. Watterson never denied it. After this he went to the office of the *Courier-Journal* and wrote his celebrated "star-eyed goddess" editorial that was copied and commented on all over the United States.

At another time he entered a cafe of which he was a regular patron and called out to the proprietor:

"What have you to eat to-night? I'm hungry."

"Well, Massa Henry, I have some nice fresh Ohio river jack salmon."

"How many have you?"

"Six."

"Well, bring me all six."

The Ohio river jack salmon weigh about two and a half pounds apiece. These six cleaned and cooked weighed fifteen pounds, the proprietor weighing them out of curiosity. Mr. Watterson finished the six, all but the bones, with a salad, some bread and quite a little liquid on the side. This is one of his favorite fishes, and he has said that he has never been able to get enough.

THE CZAR'S CRUEL FATHER.

Nicholas' Strong Contrast to His Haughty Predecessor.

The Czar is a curious contrast to his father, and the peasants in Denmark who used to gaze with admiring awe on the huge Alexander III can scarcely understand the slight boyish figure which is so overshadowed by their own tall old king can indeed be that of the great White Czar himself. In disposition and in attainments, as well as in bodily presence, the son differs strangely from the father. Alexander was a very uneducated man. His elder brother Nicholas, had been carefully taught and trained, but his death at the age of twenty-two, placed Alexander in the position of heir to the throne, and he was then too old to learn. He was a thorough Romanoff imperious and haughty. The one person with whom he was gentle was his wife, whom he treated to the last as though she were a pet child. To his underlings he could be absolutely brutal, although towards the end of his life his manners were said to have wondrously improved.

Before he succeeded to the throne a very painful thing occurred which proved how callous he could be. An officer of Swedish origin had been sent to the United States to order rifles for the Russian army. On his return he had to report to the czarewitch, who was appointed to superintend the re-arming of the troops. During the interview the prince lost his temper and began to scold sharply. The officer replied with dignity, whereupon Alexander fell into a fit of fury and loaded the officer with insult. The man bowed himself but of the royal presence, went home and wrote a letter to the heir-apparent asking him to apologize within four-and twenty hours, adding that if the apology did not come he would shoot himself.

The czarewitch took no notice, sent neither excuse nor apology, and the officer kept his word. Next morning he was dead. The Czar heard the story and was very angry with his son. He ordered him to follow the hearse of the officer to the grave. But even this terrible lesson failed to cure Alexander of his haughtiness. The gentle ways of the present Czar and his unwillingness to hurt the feelings of any one are in sharp contrast, indeed.

Life is too short to learn the names of the Roosevelt children; there are six of them, and Kermit and Quinton are samples.